1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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MAIN COMMITTEE II

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 7th MEETING

Held at United Nations Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 1 May 1995, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. ERDÖS (Hungary)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

ROLE OF THE TREATY IN THE PROMOTION OF NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND OF NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT IN STRENGTHENING INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY AND MEASURES AIMED AT PROMOTING WIDER ACCEPTANCE OF THE TREATY

1. The CHAIRMAN, after summarizing the Committee's work thus far, said that, although required to consider the question of a wider acceptance of the Treaty, the Committee was not expected to report on that subject.

2. Mr. WALKER (Australia) said that the Committee must nevertheless deal with the issue, because of the close connection between it and the work already undertaken on questions relating to article III, especially the requirement that full-scope safeguards should be accepted as a precondition for any transfer of fissionable material or products. Three more delegations, those of Armenia, Belgium and Thailand, wished to co-sponsor document NPT/CONF.1995/MC.II/WP.15, which Australia had introduced on Friday, 28 April, on behalf of its many sponsors.

3. Regarding the question of the universality or wider acceptance of the Treaty, the fifth Review Conference should not restrict itself to renewing the appeals for universality made at preceding Conferences but should deal with the matter in greater depth. During the general debate in the plenary Conference, the Egyptian Minister for Foreign Affairs had stated that the Treaty contained international rules of conduct. It was a source of great satisfaction that the number of States parties to the Treaty had increased and that only 12 non-parties remained, some of which had announced their intention to accede to the Treaty. A sensible approach might be to enter into direct contact with those countries with a view to encouraging them to accede, thereby ensuring that those last 12 hurdles to be cleared before the goal was reached were the main focus of the future strengthened review of the operation of the Treaty.

4. Ms. SAYAF (Syrian Arab Republic) said that universality was indeed an essential feature of the Treaty's effectiveness and that all States not yet parties should accede to it. That was especially relevant in the case of Israel, which should become a party to the Treaty and subject its installations to IAEA safeguards, given the importance of such a decision for peace and security throughout the region.

5. Mr. SHOUKRY (Egypt) said that countries which had not yet acceded to the Treaty represented a threat to international peace and security. The difficulties which non-proliferation still posed were caused by the non-universal character of the Treaty.

6. The CHAIRMAN said that, in response to the request of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and provided that the Committee had no objection, the deadline for the submission of working papers would be changed to 6 p.m.

7. It was so decided.

8. Mr. SUKAYRI (Jordan) said that he fully shared the views expressed by the Australian representative on the question of the universality of the Treaty, which should be an absolute requirement. The Australian representative having referred to the fact that the Treaty established to some extent international rules of conduct, he would point out that the head of the Jordanian delegation had stated in the plenary Conference that nuclear weapons were so abominable that anyone who sought to acquire them should be considered an outlaw from the standpoint of international law. He also endorsed the views expressed by the representatives of Syria and Egypt regarding Israel's accession to the Treaty and its submission to IAEA safeguards.

9. Mr. ADEKEYE (Nigeria) associated himself with the views of the Australian representative in connection with the universality of the Treaty and expressed satisfaction that only a handful of States had not yet become parties. Although few, those States were nevertheless of crucial importance in their respective regions. The international community should accordingly establish conditions conducive to peace and security in those regions, thereby encouraging States which were not parties to the Treaty to accede to it.

10. It was worth mentioning that many States were unhappy about the implementation of some provisions of the Treaty, especially article VI; that situation also might impede universality. The States parties, especially those with nuclear weapons, should renew their commitment to nuclear disarmament so as to encourage other States to accede to the Treaty. He would remind the Committee that, in 1989, Nigeria had made a proposal with respect to negative security assurances which, if adopted, would be a step in the right direction. Progress had definitely been made towards universality, but there were still many problems to be settled.

11. Mr. SCHMIDT (Austria) said that universality in terms of accession was not sufficient; it was also necessary to ensure universality in terms of the implementation of the Treaty, namely the universality of full-scope safeguards. As the Australian representative had explained, mechanisms reflecting the interests of all groups of countries should be envisaged. The implementation of the provisions of the Treaty should be both predictable and reliable. If those conditions were met, the States parties to the Treaty would know exactly why they were parties and would firmly uphold the Treaty's principal goals. Total acceptance of the spirit of the Treaty was the surest way to encourage the remaining States to become parties in their turn.

12. Mr. NORDIN (Malaysia) associated himself with the Australian representative in supporting the principle of universality but thought that ways of attaining such universality must be found. As the Austrian representative had explained, modalities for implementing the provisions of the Treaty, especially article III, must be predictable and reliable. The Committee must give special attention to that question. States which were not yet parties to the Treaty would certainly be encouraged to accede to it if they saw those two concepts become reality.

13. Mr. AYATOLLAHI (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that he endorsed the comments of previous delegations and approved in advance anything the Conference could do to persuade non-parties to accede to the Treaty, especially Israel. It

must be explained to them that their security assurances were not automatically increased because of their hesitations and that accession to the Treaty was the best of all possible assurances. In any event, the universality of the Treaty must go hand in hand with the implementation of all its provisions, whose application was extremely important not only to maintain peace but also in respect of security assurances and the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

14. The CHAIRMAN reviewed the documentation before the Committee and the items referred to it which it had dealt with. He announced that the consideration of agenda item 17 had been concluded.

The meeting rose at 11.15 a.m.